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NA MUSALMAN

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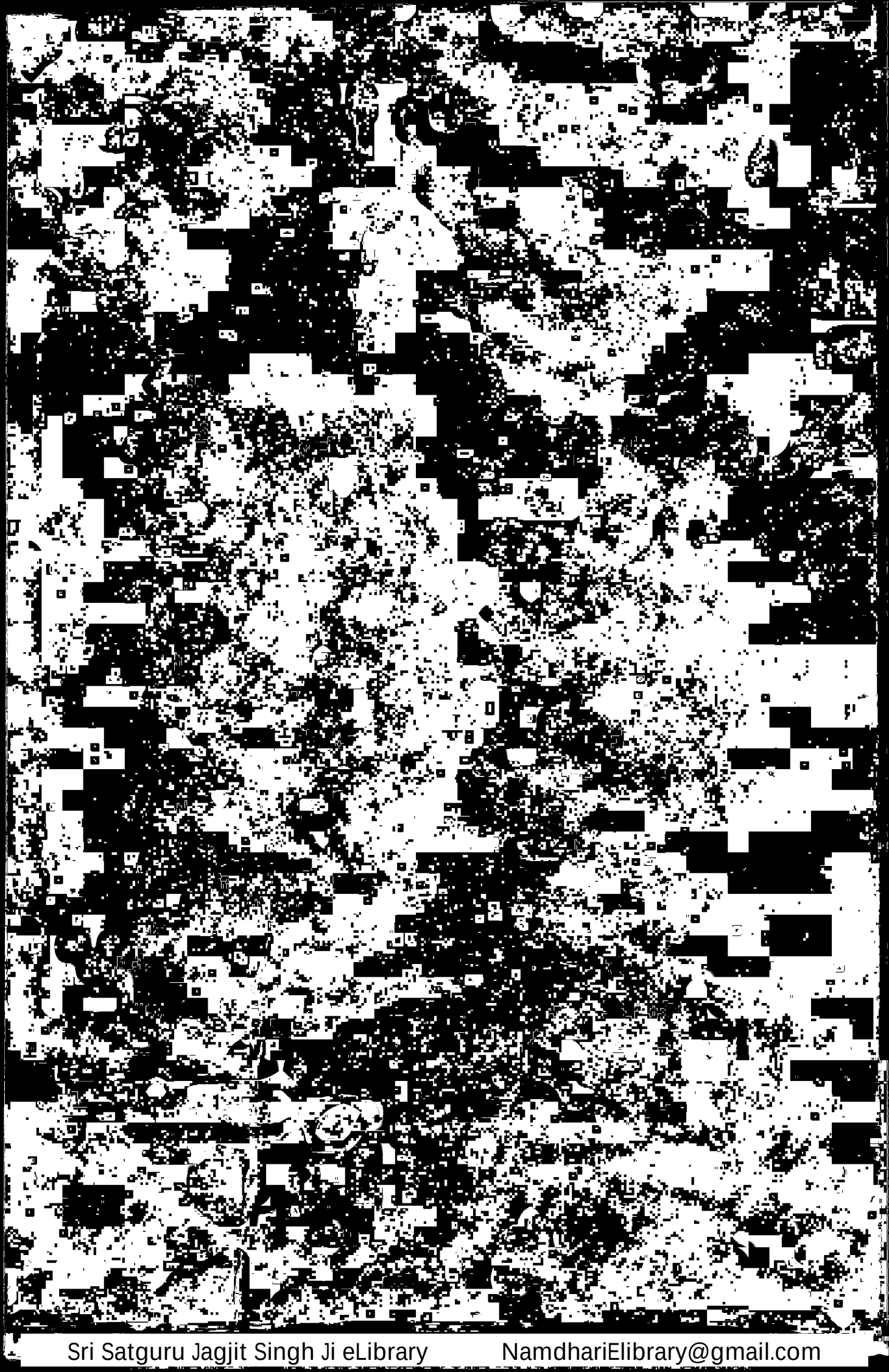

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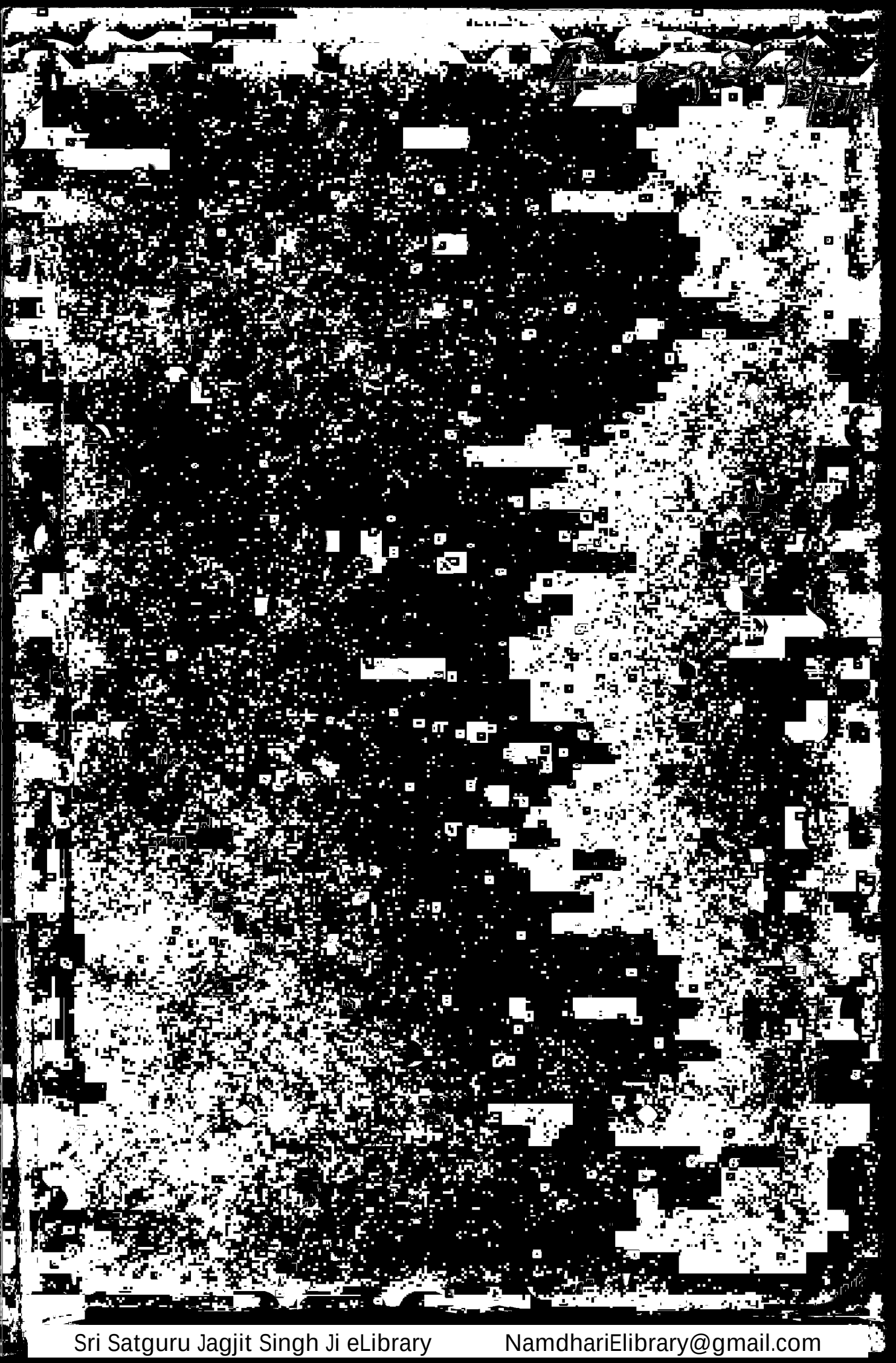

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By
V. N. Tewari

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Translated from Panjabi
By
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PUBLICATION BUREAU
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FOREWORD

Guru Nanak Dev holds an eminent place amongst the sages, seers and saints of the world. Besides, he was a great poet as also a radical social reformer. He saw the vision of a human society which would not be a house divided against itself on account of distinctions and differences of caste, creed and nationality, but which would be bound together by the ties of universal brotherhood, love and equality. He saw the degradation of human society brought about by falsehood, bigotry, intolerance, blind faith and ritualism. True religion, he believed, instead of putting shackles around the human spirit, should ennoble and enlighten the human soul.

The great Guru devoted his entire life to the task of reorganising human society according to his vision and ideals—through precept as well as through practice.

Guru Nanak not only stirred the mind and conscience of thousands during his life-time, but has deeply influenced the lives of millions of people during the last five hundred years.

It was but natural that the world in general and India in particular should have celebrated his Quincentenary Birthday (in 1969) in a befitting manner, and should have tried to pay their debt of gratitude to their great benefactor.

Intellectuals, poets and writers brought into focus various facets of the work and achievements of Guru Nanak and an impressive volume of literature on his life, teachings, poetry etc. was published.

The Panjab University, Chandigarh, also contributed its share to Guru Nanak literature by publishing nine books on the occasion.

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However, the Publication Sub-Committee of the Guru Nanak Quincentenary Birthday Celebrations Committee of Punjab felt that a small book covering all the salient features of the life, achievements and teachings of Guru Nanak Dev should be published in three languages—Panjabi, Hindi and English—for our youth in particular, and that it should be sold at a subsidized price.

It is a matter of gratification for us that the task of publishing this book was entrusted by the Celebrations Committee to the Panjab University and its writing was assigned to Dr. Vishwa Nath Tewari, Reader in its Panjabi Department. The Punjab Government gave a grant of Rs. 20,000 to the University for the purpose.

I have gone through the manuscript of the book and I am glad to say that the author has produced a readable biography which is compact yet comprehensive. He has presented a richness of detail on a small canvas—like a miniature painting. The writing is at once marked by lucidity and simplicity of style and directness of approach. The most valuable feature of the book is that the author has tried to re-interpret the message and teachings of Guru Nanak Dev in the context of the present-day conditions, and to show that they have as much relevance in the modern times as they had in the times of the Guru himself ; in fact they hold good for all times and all countries.

A few selected precepts of the Guru have been thoughtfully given in the book, in its last chapter. It is hoped that the reader will enshrine them in his heart and will draw inspiration from them, whenever he feels overwhelmed by the surrounding gloom.

I take this opportunity to thank the Punjab Government for entrusting the work of publishing the book to this University. I am also grateful to Sirdar Kapur Singh, ex-I.C.S., for having gone through the manuscript of the orignal Panjabi version and for giving useful suggestions.

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SURAJ BHAN
Vice-Chancellor

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PREFACE

Voluminous literature on the life, philosophy and teachings of Guru Nanak Dev was published in India and several foreign countries on the occasion of his Quincentenary Birthday celebrations held in 1969.

The Quincentenary Celebrations Committee of the Punjab Government decided that, besides other publications, a small book should also be brought out on the occasion, in which the life and teachings of the great Guru should be given in simple language ; it should be particularly meant for the youth of the country ; it should be brought out in at least three languages—Punjabi, Hindi and English ; and it should be made available at a subsidized price.

I am indebted to the Punjab Government for entrusting the work of writing this book to me.

I am grateful to Shri Suraj Bhan, Vice-Chancellor, Panjab University, Chandigarh who encouraged me and gave valuable suggestions to me with regard to the book.

I am also grateful to Shri Bal Krishna, Secretary, Publication Bureau, Panjab University, Chandigarh for rendering the original Panjabi book into English in a fine style and idiomatic language.

I am also deeply obliged to Shri Bal Krishna for taking personal interest in the production of the book and for bringing it out in all the three languages in a beautiful shape.

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CONTENTS

Talwandi	9
Sultanpur	20
Travels	28
Kartarpur	43
Teachings	51
Divine Lights	59

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1
TALWANDI

Guru Nanak was born on April 15, 1469 in a village named 'Rae Bhoe Di Talwandi' situated in Sheikhupura District which is no· in Pakistan. (Later on, this place earned the name of 'Nankana Sahib'.) Mehta Kalu was the father of Nanak and Tripta his mother. He had also an elder sister, named Nanki. Nanak was the apple of the eyes of all the three of them.

Rae Bular was the landlord of this village and the adjoining areas and Mehta Kalu was his Revenue Accountant(*Patwari*). As such, the people of the manor respected him. Tripta was a lady of sweet temper and gentle nature. Mehta Kalu was a shrewd person and a 'man of the world', and he wanted Nanak also to follow the worldly path. But his hopes were not fulfilled. Nanak was not a man of this world. He carved out a different path for himself and inspired thousands of people to follow that path.

Mehta Kalu and Tripta felt very happy on the birth of a son. Their mutual relations, which were not happy earlier, became sweet now. They had a neighbour, named Sayyad Hussain, who had no issue of his own. He started loving Nanak like his own son. Nanak was influenced by Hindu religion and thought as a result of his being born in a Hindu

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family, and by Muslim religion and thought through this neighbour. Nanak's childhood was spent in an open and free atmosphere ; therefore, his mind developed free from prejudices and bigotry. He started respecting the Prophet of Islam and other great Muslim saints and men of religion, as much as he respected Hindu incarnations of God and gods and goddesses. For him, the Hindu name of God, *Ishwar*, and the Muslim name of God, *Allah*, were the same.

Every child likes to play games ; so did Nanak. But his games were different from the usual games of children. He would play games of 'devotion to God'—games which showed that Nanak was an unusual child and he had a natural, inborn love for God. He even persuaded his playmates to take part in his unusual games.

Nanak was sent to a school run by one, Pandit Gopal, to get formal education. He studied at that school for about two years. But his attendance at the school was not regular. However, he absented himself from the school, neither to play with his playmates nor to run away from the school on account of fear of corporal punishment by his teacher. In fact, if he slipped away from the school, it was only to join Sayyad Hussain in the adjoining forests. Sayyad Hussain was extremely fond of the company of *sadhus* and *faqirs*, who either lived in those forests or stayed there temporarily during their wanderings. Nanak would sit on the lap of Sayyad Hussain and listen to the discourses of those holy men. He got more and more interested in their discourses as he grew and very soon he realized that the knowledge of 3 R.s was not so important as spiritual knowledge. On the other hand, for Mehta Kalu, knowledge of 3 R.s was all important. He wanted his son to acquire the usual worldly knowledge, so that he could be a worldly man and earn his livelihood when he grew up. Thus, the paths and the aims of the father and the son became different. The father

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did not like the bent of mind of his son. He tried to reason with Nanak and wean him away from *sadhus* and *faqirs*. But when Nanak did not respond, he was stopped from going to the school of Pandit Gopal.

Mehta Kalu decided to engage his son in worldly tasks and, in the first instance, entrusted him with the job of taking out his buffaloes to his fields for grazing. Nanak agreed to do so and started taking out the cattle to the fields. But he had neither changed his mind nor his habits. He would, of course, go to the fields, but, leaving the cattle to graze or stray wherever they liked, he would either get absorbed in meditation or go into the neighbouring forests to benefit from the discourses of holy men. The more Mehta Kalu tried to turn Nanak into a worldly man, the more Nanak turned away from worldliness. He became a problem for his father. Sometimes Nanak would sit under a tree and get absorbed in spiritual thoughts while snakes moved about and his cattle strayed into the fields of other people, but he would not bother. Mehta Kalu felt deeply perturbed and came to the conclusion that it would be no use trying to put Nanak to any worldly avocation. He, therefore, decided to put him again to a school.

There was another school in the village besides that of Pandit Gopal. A great scholar, Pandit Brij Nath, who was well-versed in Sanskrit, Hindu religion, Hindu lore and Hindu philosophical thought was running this school. Nanak was, this time, admitted to this school. The teacher started teaching Sanskrit and Hindu Scriptures to him. The father had sent the son to the school so that his association with *sadhus* and *faqirs* would discontinue. But his association with Pandit Brij Nath, and his study of Sanskrit, Hindu scriptures and Hindu philosophy deepened his interest in religion, philosophy and spiritualism. He had also not discontinued his visits to the forests to meet men of religion. The net result was that his mind

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inclined more and more towards spirituality and other-worldliness.

The teather always insisted upon Nanak to write the word 'Om' in the beginning of every writing. However, one day Nanak surprised his teacher by asking him as to why he should do so. The teacher replied that this custom had been followed since ancient times. Then Nanak asked the real meaning of 'Om', but the teacher could not give a satisfactory answer. Then Nanak himself recited a few lines in which he described the real meaning and significance of this word. The teacher was astonished when he heard the lines full of deep philosophical thought and wisdom from the lips of the child. (These lines were later refined, and this composition is known as 'Onkar'.)

When Nanak attained the age of ten, Mehta Kalu arranged the Sacred Thread ceremony for his son. He made elaborate arrangements and invited his relations and friends from far and near. Almost the whole populace of Talwandi gathered at his house to attend the ceremony. Fire was lighted for *havan* and hymns from the *Vedas* were recited. However, when the family priest, with the Sacred Thread (*Janeu*) in his hands, advanced towards Nanak to put it round his body, he (Nanak) surprised the whole congregation by catching hold of the thread and asking the priest, "Why are you making me wear this thread ?"

Priest : This is a symbol of Hindu religion.

Nanak : Religion has nothing to do with the thread.

Priest : Our ancestors have been wearing the *janeu* from times immemorial. The caste Hindus must wear it ; otherwise they would remain on a lower plane—their status would be that of low-caste people.

Nanak : I do not see any advantage in wearing it.

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Priest : You will attain not only higher caste but also greatness in this world and happiness in the next.

Nanak : This is a mere thread, made of cotton. How can one attain greatness and happiness by putting on a mere cotton-thread ?

All the people present were startled, Mehta Kalu was dumbfounded and the priest felt non-plussed. They tried to bring Nanak round, but he remained firm and refused point-blank to wear the thread. His mind was not satisfied, and it was not in his nature to do anything merely in observance of a custom, ritual or tradition.

The father was infuriated at the outrageous conduct of his son. He felt he had been insulted by his son in the presence of his relatives, friends and the village people. Out of sheer desperation, he removed Nanak from the school of Pandit Brij Nath, having come to the conclusion that it was from this teacher that Nanak had learnt arguing. Mehta Kalu wanted his son to follow the old customs, traditions and thoughts blindly; but Nanak wanted to know the how and why of everything. The father and the son were entirely different from each other. None of them could understand and appreciate the position of the other in spite of mutual affection.

Mehta Kalu decided once again to put Nanak to worldly pursuits and asked him to help him in the farm-work. Nanak obeyed his father. Mehta once again hoped that, once engaged in farm-work, Nanak would forget *sadhus* and religion and spirituality. Nanak's association with *sadhus* was the main problem of the father who desired that Nanak may or may not execute his studies but he should remain away from the company of those who had renounced the world. His apprehension was that the result of Nanak's association with such persons would be the renunciation of the world by Nanak himself. Nanak

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respected his father and wanted to carry out his wishes, but he also did not want to give up his sittings with *sadhus*. He liked them and their talks about God who created this earth, the heaven and the stars, and at whose bidding rivers flow, vegetables grow and all form of life is created. Kalu wanted his son to take interest in the visible world, but Nanak was interested in the Invisible, and wanted to know Him.

Nanak started going to the farm but his heart was not in this work. He remained bodily present on the farm but his mind wandered into the forests where he wanted to find the Ultimate Reality. Nanak would forget himself for hours and contemplate on the Divine. Mehta Kalu failed in his object. He could not wean Nanak away from his path. Unhappy in his mind, and anxious about the future of his son, one day he went to the landlord, Rae Bular, and said, "Rae Ji, Nanak is following a wrong path. I am deeply worried about his behaviour."

Rae Bular : Kalu ! You are wrong in your assessment of your son. Nanak is a boy of great promise. He is an exceptional being.

Kalu : But why should he not take to agriculture; why should he not take interest in worldly affairs; why should he go to the jungles and sit with *sadhus* and *faqirs* ?

Rae Bular : He has the whole life before him to attend to these things. He is no more than a lad at present. You should not put worldly burdens on his shoulders at this age. You should, in fact, allow him to continue his studies.

Mehta Kalu was in a fix. He had removed Nanak from the school twice in the hope that he would give up his association with *sadhus* and would take interest in worldly affairs. But his hopes had not been fulfilled : the removal of Nanak from the school had failed to bring about the desired result. But now

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Rae Bular was again advising him to allow Nanak to continue his studies. After a good deal of thinking, Kalu decided to follow the advice of the landlord. However, this time he thought that education in Sanskrit would not do Nanak any good. Muslims ruled over India and Persian was the court language. Mehta Kalu now thought that if his son was not interested in agriculture, he should learn Persian and seek a government job.

By now, a Persian and Arabic Scholar, Maulvi Qutb-ud-Din, had settled in the village and had opened a school of Persian and Arabic. Aiming at a government job for Nanak, the father this time sent his son to this new school, so that he would learn the court language. The Maulvi was a tactful teacher and, besides, he was a *Sufi*. Therefore, Nanak at once took a liking for his new teacher. But here, again, Nanak's bent of mind towards spirituality got a fillip through the *Sufi* teacher. Through Pandit Brij Nath Nanak had learnt about Hindu religion, philosophy and Hindu view of God, while from Maulvi Qutb-ud-Din, he learnt about the four stages in the *Sufi* path to salvation : *Shariat*, the law of external ceremonies ; *Tariqat*, walking in God's way ; *Maarfat*, Divine Law ; and *Haqiqat*, union with God.

Nanak continued his studies at the Maulvi's school for five years. Mehta Kalu felt very happy at this development. He could now reasonably hope to get a government job for his son. On the other hand, Nanak was also feeling happy and satisfied with his new studies—but for a different reason : he had been able to learn about Islam and *Sufi* philosophy as well. He had come to the conclusion that God was one and the same, though Hindus, Muslims and other people may call Him by different names. He had also realized that Hindu religion and Muslim religion were only two paths, but their destination was the same.

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Boys at the age of 15 plus were expected in those days to take full interest in some profession or vocation. But Nanak was a boy of a different stamp. He generally remained aloof and contemplative. His visits to the forests had, if anything, become more frequent now and he would remain there for days on end. He did not even care to take his meals. He became a total introvert and would not come out of his mood for hours. His urge to know the Divine increased day by day. Forgetful of his surroundings and of what was happening around him, he would go into contemplation and remain in that state for long spells. He was always serious. He was neither fond of good clothes nor of nice food. Visiting holy men and discussing God and the way to attain Him was the only thing in which he was interested. His father's remonstrance, his mother's sweet reasoning and his friends' persuasion failed to change Nanak. He would not listen to them ; he would listen only to his inner voice and would act according to his inner urges. The condition of Mehta Kalu's mind under such circumstances can be more easily imagined than described. However, in spite of utter frustration, he thought that there was still a way out—probably the only way out, namely, to get Nanak married. The mother also agreed with her husband on this solution. They started talking about this matter openly and Kalu even chose his future daughter-in-law. But Nanak was least interested in this matter.

The prospect of Nanak's marriage was talked about by his parents in the house. But it was not possible for Kalu to make an announcement outside, since his daughter Nanki, who was well advanced in years according to the standards of the time, was still unmarried. Nanak's marriage before that of Nanki was bound to create a social problem for Kalu, according to the custom which prevailed then and which prevails even now-a-days. Ultimately, this problem of Kalu was solved through the

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good offices of Rae Bular, who arranged a decent match for Nanki. This was Jai Ram of Sultanpur, a handsome youngman having a good deal of influence with the ruler of that principality. Nanki was married to Jai Ram in a befitting manner.

Soon after Nanki's marriage, the marriage of Nanak was also performed. The marriage took place on April 1, 1485 He was about 16 years of age at that time. The bride was Sulakhni, daughter of Mool Chand Khatri who was working at the moment as a Patwari at Batala. The marriage ceremony was performed with great pomp and show. Nanak was the only son of his father; it was, therefore, natural for the Mehta to celebrate the marriage in as grand a manner as he could. In the marriage ceremonies, Kalu saw his hopes about the future of his son personified. He felt sure that he had retrieved his son.

The marriage party came back to Talwandi after enjoying festivities at Batala for four days. However, according to the prevailing custom, the bride went back to her father's place after a short stay at Talwandi. It was also decided, again according to the prevalent custom, that Nanak should bring home his bride after three years. Mehta Kalu, therefore, thought that the intervening period could very well be utilized in making Nanak understand the duties of married life and in making him an earning hand. After all, Nanak must earn in order to be able to sustain his household. Mehta Kalu naturally desired his son to follow the ways of the world—to earn, to rear his family and remain happy and contented.

The experiment of getting Nanak interested in agriculture had failed. Mehta Kalu felt that the village offered a good opportunity for a shop, and he opened one for his son. One day, he gave Rs. 20/- to Nanak and asked him to bring articles of trade which could find a ready sale in the village,

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from the town of Chuharkana which was about twenty miles from his own village. The father gave all sorts of instructions to the son as to what articles he was to bring and how to purchase them. In conclusion, he advised Nanak to make "a good and profitable bargain" ("*sacha sauda*"). Moreover, he also promised Nanak that in case he succeeded even modestly in this retail business, he would, later on, help him in undertaking the larger and more lucrative trade in horses, which, of course, meant much larger investment. The father also asked the family servant, Bala, to accompany Nanak to the market-town for helping him and for carrying back the articles purchased there.

When Nanak and Bala almost reached Chuharkana, they came across a party of naked *sadhus* belonging to the *Nirvani* sect, on the outskirts of the town. Nanak at once felt interested in the *sadhus*, stopped there, sat with them and had a long discourse with their leader, Sant (saint) Ren. Nanak was impressed by their hunger for divine knowledge. But when he learnt that they had not taken any food for quite a few days, he felt deeply distressed and the thoughts of the shop, the business and the bargain all vanished from his mind. He hastened to Chuharkana, and, with the money that his father had advanced to him for business, he purchased provisions and fed the *sadhus* to their hearts' content. The *sadhus* gave him copious blessings. Nanak felt a sort of spiritual joy and satisfaction, but Bala felt miserable. Nanak was thinking of God, while Bala was thinking of Mehta Kalu. Nanak had fed God's devotees and had thus served God Himself. He thought he had really made the best use of the money given by his father : he had earned spiritual satisfaction. In other words, he had made the best possible bargain with the money.

When Nanak and Bala returned to the village empty-handed, and when Kalu learnt about what had happened, he

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became furious. He now lost all hopes of 'reforming' the son. His attitude towards Nanak became hardened and harsh. The father even left off speaking to the son. An atmosphere of tension and unhappiness filled the house. Mother Tripta was in a miserable condition. What could she do under these circumstances ? She had great regard for her husband and deep affection for her son. However, she was unable to prevail upon her husband to forgive the son; nor could she bring her son round to follow the worldly ways. In fact, both the father and the son were honest in their convictions and true to their urges.

The atmosphere of tension continued without any respite. After a few months of the above incident, Jai Ram happened to visit Talwandi. When he heard of the incident and the tension between the father and the son, he offered to take Nanak to his own home-town, Sultanpur. Kalu readily agreed to this proposal. A few days after Jai Ram had left for Sultanpur, Nanak followed and reached Sultanpur after a journey of five days.

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2

SULTANPUR

Nanki was extremely pleased at the arrival of Nanak at her home. Nanak was not an unwise youngman. He clearly understood the difference between his parents' home and that of his brother-in-law. He did not want to be a burden on his sister and his brother-in-law. He was indifferent to worldly affairs, but he possessed self-respect in an ample measure. He, therefore, expressed his desire to get employed. Jai Ram understood the mind and inner urge of Nanak and assured him that he could continue his religious and spiritual quest at Sultanpur. However, Nanak now decided to follow the worldly path at least for once.

Jai Ram, who had quite a good amount of influence with the ruler of Sultanpur, Nawab Daulat Khan, approached him for a job for Nanak. The Nawab readily obliged Jai Ram and appointed Nanak as his *Modi*, i.e. Store-keeper. Nanak started his service-career in December, 1487, when he was about 18 years of age. He took to his job enthusiastically. The duty of Nanak as *Modi* was to sell provisions, clothes etc. to people. He felt happy to see people coming to the stores to fulfil their needs and go back satisfied. As such, the work was most agreeable to his disposition.

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When the news of Nanak's employment reached Talwandi, Kalu felt overjoyed and came to Sultanpur to see his son working. He brought Mardana, the village *mirasi* (the caste whose people are hereditary musicians), with him and left him there to keep company with Nanak. Nanak had been very fond of Mardana while living at Talwandi and felt very happy to have his old friend with him. He found a job for Mardana at the stores. Both worked hard at the *modikhana* and made a great success of it.

The Nawab had ordered that a certain quantity of the provisions should be given every day in charity to the needy, i.e. to beggars, *sadhus & faqirs*. The previous *modis* did not give away the whole of this quantity and made money out of the balance for themselves. But Nanak gave the whole portion set apart for charity every day. Therefore, the needy flocked to the *modikhana* in ever greater numbers, with the result that the quantity of provisions set apart for charity began to prove insufficient. It was, however, this part of the job which gave the greatest happiness and satisfaction to Nanak. He could not bear to see any needy person going back disappointed. He, therefore, cut down his own expenses to the very minimum and the money thus saved from his pay was utilized by him in purchasing provisions and giving the same to the ever-increasing number of the needy. However, he did so, not in his own name, but in the name of the *modikhana*.

Towards purchasers also, he was amiable and cordial. He would welcome everybody with a smile and would weigh provisions correctly, as against the practice of his predecessors who would give provisions to customers in less than correct measure or weight. He did not behave towards people as an officer—in an officious and haughty manner. He regarded his job as an opportunity to serve the people, and that is why he was happy and satisfied with his work.

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Nanak became popular with everybody due to his amiable nature and honest work and his popularity increased day by day. Here, there and everywhere—in the streets and in the homes—people talked of Nanak and the *modikhana*. Everybody praised him. What a difference between the present and the previous times ! In previous times the *modis* would scowl at them and give out provisions in less than correct measure or weight. And as far as beggars, *sadhu* and *faqirs* were concerned, they got more abuses and less alms. But, now, purchasers got provisions in correct weighment—and with a smile, while the needy got alms according to their needs, and that also without any ill-treatment. Nanak was not only cordial, sweet-tempered and honest, but also very hard-working. Everybody was all praise for him.

While, on the one hand, Nanak's honesty and amiable nature won for him a large number of admirers, on the other, as is natural under such circumstances, some people became jealous of him, particularly other workers of the *modikhana*, who had been co-sharers in illegal gains in the times of Nanak's predecessors. They joined hands in a conspiracy to bring dishonour upon Nanak. They began to talk ill of Nanak and ultimately reported to the Nawab that Nanak was squandering the provisions of the *modikhana* and was not discharging his duties properly. The Nawab did not, at first, pay heed to them, but they ultimately succeeded in poisoning his mind against Nanak. He ordered an enquiry into the affairs of the *modikhana*. The enquiry was conducted but everything was found in order. The Nawab was satisfied and gave a clean chit to Nanak. The efforts of the jealous and the malicious misfired. Nanak felt very happy at the outcome of the enquiry and he re-started his work with redoubled enthusiasm.

Nanak led a very simple and pious life. According to the Hindu traditions, he would rise early in the morning, go out,

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bathe in the nearby rivulet, 'Bein', sit in meditation and then come back to the town and start his work at the *modikhana*. He would come home in the evening and again go out for a walk after taking his meals.

The pious life of Nanak attracted a large number of people to him. Mardana, the musician, was with him. Nanak started holding *satsangs* in late hours in the evenings to which people flocked in ever greater numbers. Nanak would compose hymns and sing them and Mardana would play the Rebeck and both would be lost in communion with God. Religious discourses would follow in praise of the Almighty. This became a daily feature of his life. People put questions to Nanak and he answered them to their satisfaction.

Nanak held these religious congregations on account of his inner urges. But his sister Nanki thought that he was doing so since he had no attraction in the house, his wife being not there. She talked to her husband about it. Jai Ram also partly thought that way. He was satisfied that Nanak had settled down to his work and was taking keen interest in his job. Moreover, the period of three years, after which Nanak was to bring his wife home, was also coming to a close. Jai Ram, therefore, persuaded Nanak to bring his wife from his father-in-law's place to Sultanpur.

Nanak agreed and brought his wife Sulakhni from Batala to Sultanpur.

Nanak now settled down as a regular householder, but his new life did not alter his daily routine. He continued holding congregations in the evenings. He would, as previously, get lost in meditation and praise of the Lord. People from far and wide now came to attend these congregations and found spiritual satisfaction. The congregations were not confined to Hindus alone. Men of all religions, sects and denominations

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joined them. Hindus of high caste and low caste, Muslims, the rich and the poor, all were attracted to them. Nanak would tell them that there was no difference between man and man ; that God was present in every object, animate or inanimate ; and that He was the creator and father of all. Nanak would talk to people in their own language. He condemned religious shams and bigotry. People were tired of ritualism and ceremonialism, on which Hindu and Muslim priests, Pandits and Qazis, laid so much emphasis, but which were devoid of real religious spirit. Nanak's discourses were very simple in content : work hard earn your bread by the sweat of your brow, feel happy and contented with your family life, and always remember God who is One, although people have given Him different names ; He belongs to everybody and everybody belongs to Him. People liked these ideas ; therefore, attendance at the congregations increased steadily day by day.

While Nanak's popularity and respect among the people increased, it also gave rise to more pungent jealousy in the minds of those few who had been opposing Nanak on account of sheer malice. Their previous failure in implicating Nanak with regard to the accounts and stores of the *modikhana* was also rankling in their hearts. After Nanak had been given a clean chit by the Nawab, Nanak had been devoting himself to the work of the *modikhana* with greater zeal and with a more easy mind. But his opponents, particularly his colleagues of the *modikhana*, had not become inactive. They again started poisoning the mind of the Nawab against Nanak and charged him with misappropriating government funds. Persistent back-biting ultimately made the Nawab suspicious and this time he personally supervised the checking of accounts and got the balance provisions lying in the stores weighed in his presence. This examination was carried out thoroughly and lasted for five days. Nanak's opponents were sure that this time the accounts would

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not tally and Nanak would be found guilty and would be dismissed. That is exactly what they wanted because Nanak stood in their way of making gains for themselves from the stores. However, the result of the checking revealed a different state of affairs. The balance stocks were found correct, and, in the matter of accounts, it was found that, far from owing anything to the *modikhana,* it was Nanak who had arrears of Rs. 321/- due to him. The Nawab felt immensely pleased and, feeling sorry for having inflicted pain on an honest soul, and in order to compensate Nanak for this pain, he not only gave orders for the payment of this amount to Nanak, but also gave him a handsome reward. Nanak's honour was rehabilitated ; in fact, people now gave him greater respect. The people who used to assemble at his evening congregations, now listened to him with greater attention and faith and their number increased steadily.

The Nawab never listened to the malicious people again. The mind of Nanak was eased and he now devoted himself to God with greater zeal. In his prayers, he would go into trances for hours.

After the above incident, Nanak continued to serve at the *modikhana* for the next 10 years or so.

During this period, two sons were born to him—the elder, Sri Chand, was born in 1494 and the younger, Lakhmi Chand, in 1496.

Nanak had served at the *modikhana* for 12 years when in 1499 something strange happened which changed the future course of his life One morning, according to his usual practice, he went to the 'Bein', along with his faithful companion Mardana, to take a dip into the stream. He removed his clothes, entered the stream and disappeared after a while. A search was made in the stream, in the jungles, and far and near. The Nawab also felt deeply worried and deputed his officials and

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servants to search out Nanak. But Nanak was not found. At last, people came to the conclusion that he had been drowned.

However, on the third day, Nanak reappeared from out of the 'Bein' near the spot from where he had entered the stream. Mardana was still waiting for his master. On coming to the bank, he proclaimed in an inspired manner, "Na Ko Hindu Na Musalman". (There is neither any Hindu nor any Musalman.) He came back to the town, but an entirely changed man. He resigned his job, got the accounts of the *modikhana* checked, and conveyed his desire to the Nawab that all that was found to be due to him be given in alms to the needy. His sister, brother-in-law, friends and admirers felt puzzled and distressed at what Nanak had done. People thought there was no earthly reason why he should resign when he had a wife and two sons and was leading a happy and successful life, enjoying the confidence of his employer and the esteem of hundreds of friends and admirers. They came to the conclusion that Nanak had committed a grave mistake. Some even feared that he had probably gone out of his head.

Nanak's friends tried their best to persuade him to retrace his steps, but he had taken a firm and irrevokable decision to follow his inner voice. He changed his dress, put on the garb of a *faqir*, and started preaching what he considered to be true religion to the people in a regular way. Nanak was most eloquent in his discourses on God and on what real religion was. In those days, religious leaders and priests of both the communities, Hindu and Muslim, laid emphasis on outward symbols, on ceremonies and formalism. Nanak opposed this approach and laid all emphasis on inner devotion to God, on pure life and conduct. The essence of religion, according to him, lay in truth, universal love, piety and service of fellow human beings. He proclaimed again and again that there was no Hindu and no Musalman and that it was a very difficult thing to become a

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true Hindu or a true Muslim. These pronouncements of Nanak infuriated religious priests, both Hindu and Muslim, more particularly the latter. The *Qazi* of Sultanpur prevailed upon the Nawab to summon Nanak to his presence and explain the meaning of his above remark. According to the *Qazi*, what Nanak said was a religious offence and an affront to Muslims. Nanak appeared at the Court and when asked to explain what he meant by saying "There is neither any Hindu nor any Musalman", he replied boldly :

"To be called a Muslim is very difficult indeed ;
One can rightly claim to be called a Muslim, only if :
He, first, follows the path of men of God and removes the dirt of sin as a grind-stone removes rust ;
Then he sincerely accepts the teachings of holy men, and overcomes the delusion of Life and Death ;
Submits to the will of the Lord, accepts Him as the Creator and the Lord, and destroys his ego ;
It is only then, saith Nanak, as also when he is compassionate towards all living beings, that he can rightly be called a Muslim."

Nanak reiterated that Muslims and Hindus were following religion only outwardly ; that they talked of religion loudly but did not really know what true religion was ; and that although he had met hundreds of persons who claimed to be men of religion, yet he had not come across a single Hindu or a Musalman who was really devoted to God.

What Nanak said in the court silenced the *Qazi* and made the Nawab thoughtful. The Nawab realized that what Nanak had said was true, and, therefore, he let Nanak go in peace.

Nanak left Sultanpur in February, 1500, in order to preach his ideas to the world. He was 30 years of age at that time.

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3
TRAVELS

Nanak was very unhappy at the prevailing atmosphere in the country. Unhappiness, restlessness, frustration, religious shams and deception were the order of the day. People were politically crushed and enveloped in economic depression. They did not appear to have any soul and certainly did not have the freedom of expression. They were steeped in ignorance and superstitions and did not know what true religion and higher religious life were. Nanak realised all this deeply. He tried to find out the root cause of this sorry state of affairs. He decided to make people happy and bring light into their lives. However, it was necessary to go to people and live in their midst in order to know their problems. In those days, the land was studded with religious centres and holy places of Hindus as well as Muslims. A large number of the so-called pious men and religious leaders lived at these places. Thousands of people visited them every day, more especially on certain festivals and special religious days, to purify themselves and earn religious merit. These centres, Nanak realized, exercised a great influence on the mind of the people. He, therefore, decided to visit these places in order not only to bring the religious leaders of the people on to the right path, but also to preach true religion to the multitude who congregated at these places. He had

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realized that people had forgotten the true spirit of religion and spirituality and had fallen into the morass of ritualism, symbolism and formalism. He tried to expose the worthlessness of all such practices and give enlightenment to people.

Nanak stood up against falsehood and rebelled against false religious notions. He opposed the social values and the religious order of the day, criticised them boldly and placed before the people the plan of an ideal social order. A large number of people who had been attending his discourses at Sultanpur had by and by accepted his ideas. Nanak felt that he had the power to influence the minds of the people, and the faith of Sultanpur people in his ideas urged him to widen his field of activity. He came to the conclusion that it was necessary for him to snap his worldly attachments and to cut himself off from his family, parents and friends in order to reach the people far and wide. However, this is more easily said than done. Renouncing the world requires super-human determination. Nanak had determined his path and decided to follow the same unflinchingly.

Nanak became one of the greatest travellers of the world. Travelling over long distances in those days was not an easy job. There were no roads worth the name ; there were wide and dense jungles in between inhabited places. These jungles were infested by wild animals and snakes on the one hand, and robbers on the other. Nanak did not know where he would stay at various places. He was not sure whether he would be received cordially by the people. But Nanak was brave and courageous. He was a man of resolute will. He had taken a firm decision to travel far and wide to spread his message, and no fear could deflect him from his chosen path.

Nanak wanted to see his parents before starting on his travels. Lahore was 60 miles from Sultanpur and Talwandi 40 miles from Lahore. Nanak left Sultanpur along with Mardana and after a few days reached Lahore where he stayed at

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a place near 'Jawaharmal ka Chauhatta.' There he saw butchers cutting the throats of cows and he-goats and reciting the 'Kalma' while doing so, in order to please God. Nanak told them that they could not please God, though they could please themselves, by what they were doing, since it would bring them money. Similarly, when Nanak was invited by one, Duni Chand Khatri, to join the feast which the latter had arranged by way of 'Shraddha', he refused to do so. Nanak said that no food could reach the dead ; therefore the 'Shraddha'-feasts were useless. Man should use his brains in order to decide such matters.

From Lahore, the two reached Eminabad and stayed at the humble abode of a carpenter, Lalo by name. He was poor and of a low caste, but he was honest and devoted to God. Nanak felt happy in staying with this poor but God-fearing man. He would sing songs in praise of the Almighty and Mardana would play the Rebeck, and both would forget the world. The news spread that a great devotee of God had come to Eminabad. His fame spread far and near in no time. By chance, during his stay at this place, a high Government official, Malik Bhago, performed a big *yagya* and gave a feast on a large scale to Brahmans and other holy men. Malik Bhago had heard of the religious accomplishments of Nanak and invited him to participate in the *yagya* and the feast. Nanak had, however, learnt from Lalo that Bhago oppressed the people and earned money by unlawful means. He, therefore, refused to oblige the Malik, who took it as a great insult. The Malik sent his servants to bring Nanak and Mardana to his place somehow or the other. Nanak was not the man to avoid the encounter. He reached the Malik's house.

When Malik Bhago saw him, he said harshly, "Why did you not accept my invitation ?"

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Nanak : It was for me to accept or not to accept the invitation.

Bhago : What is your caste ?

Nanak : Humanity.

Bhago : Why do you stay at the place of that low-caste fellow ?

Nanak : It is my own sweet-will.

Bhago : But this is an insult to me.

Nanak : Staying at your place and accepting your food would be an insult to God.

Bhago : Why ?

Nanak : You oppress people and earn through the sufferings of your fellow beings. If and when you start earning only through lawful means, and then perform a *yagya*, I will certainly attend it and dine at your place.

After visiting a few places such as Sialkot, Gujranwala and Mattiwind, Nanak ultimately reached Talwandi. He was visiting his birth-place after a lapse of about 13 years.

When his parents saw their son wearing the garb of a *sadhu*, they felt awfully distressed. The mother started crying and the father was enraged beyond words. Both of them tried in their own way to dissuade Nanak from carrying out his resolve but failed. Nanak touched their feet and left Talwandi on the first of his long travels which are called *udasis*. Mardana accompanied him.

Nanak and Mardana reached Kasur and after visiting several places reached Kurukshetra where a fair was being held in connection with the solar eclipse and thousands of people had gathered to take a dip in the holy tanks of that religious place. He confronted the orthodoxy and gave them the scientific explanation of solar eclipses. He exposed the

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Brahmanical superstitions and religious shams and the selfish motives of priests. He challenged scholars of traditional Hinduism to discussions on the true nature of God and the universe and on what constituted real religion. In all these discussions, the orthodox were vanquished, and people got light and wisdom.

From Kurukshetra, Nanak reached the important holy place of Hardwar in order to spread his message amongst the great number of pilgrims who resorted to this place to bathe in the sacred Ganges and earn religious merit. According to the popular belief, the people were throwing water towards the East. In fact, they were offering water to the Sun-god and believed that the water would thus reach their dead ancestors, who would obtain satiation.

Nanak always used a simple device in accordance with the occasion to attract the attention of the people. Here he struck up a very simple but very effective plan. While the whole congregation was facing towards the East and throwing water in that direction, Nanak waded in the Ganges a few paces, stood with his face towards the West and started throwing water in that direction.

A sensation spread amongst the people and they started criticising the action of Nanak. While some said that he was probably ignorant of the correct way of offering water to the ancestors, some even condemned him as an irreligious man and even a heretic. Some came to him to teach him the correct method of offering water to the Sun-god and the ancestors. One of them said, "Water is offered towards the East, since the Sun rises in that direction. Why are you throwing water towards the West ?" Nanak replied, "I am only throwing water toward the West in order to irrigate my fields." The person asked him, "How would water reach your fields ?" This was exactly the question for which Nanak was waiting. He said, "If water thrown by me here cannot reach my fields which are

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only 300 miles from here how can it reach the other world where you say your dead ancestors live ?"

The assemblage was dumbfounded on hearing this remark of Nanak. It was difficult to judge from Nanak's dress whether he was a Hindu or a Musalman. He was wearing a yellow gown, white scarf round his neck, and a long cap such as was generally worn by Muslim *faqirs*, while he had also applied sandal-paste on his forehead as Hindus did. People questioned each other about who this strange person was.

Nanak gave discourses to the pilgrims on what constituted true religion and spirituality. He condemned ritualism prevalent both amongst the Hindus and the Muslims. He exhorted the people to lead a truthful life and to create in their hearts love for the entire humanity, since all were equal in the eyes of their Creator.

After a few days, Nanak proceeded towards the East. He visited Ayodhya and Prayag (Allahabad)—two other important holy places of the Hindus—and spread his ideas amongst pilgrims there. Then he reached Kashi (Varanasi) which is one of the most prominent sacred places of the Hindus. Kashi has been a big centre of religious education since long. Scholars would come to the place from far and wide and would discuss religious theories and the scriptures. They would place various interpretations of the scriptures and their own views on metaphysics and ethics before each other and discussions and discourses would follow. They would argue in favour of their views and quote from the scriptures in support of their ideas. Nanak felt that these discussions were an exercise in futility and did not lead people anywhere. Hindus believed that if a person died in Kashi he was sure to attain salvation. But Nanak preached to the people that this was a false idea. The only way to salvation lay in giving up worldly desires and sinful life.

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A great scholar of the orthodox school of Hinduism, Pandit Chatur Das, lived at Kashi. He was a savant of *Vaishnav* cult. Nanak had a long discussion with him.

Pandit : Why don't you wear the garb of a Hindu ?

Nanak : The garb is of no significance. One should be a Hindu in his heart and in his actions.

Pandit : Have you studied the Hindu scriptures ?

Nanak : I am trying to know Him, about whom the scriptures have been written.

Pandit : But one cannot know Him without studying the scriptures.

Nanak : He can be known and realized only through good actions.

Ultimately, Pandit Chatur Das and a number of other scholars of various schools of Hindu philosophy and religion were vanquished and they became his followers. A large number of people also followed suit.

From Varanasi, Nanak reached Gaya which is another well-known holy place of the Hindus. Here, the Hindus offer *pind* to their dead ancestors for the peace of their souls and for their salvation. They make offerings in cash and kind to the priests ('pandas') who claim that they arrange to transfer these offerings to the ancestors of the persons who offer them. Nanak told the ignorant people that nobody could be made to attain salvation that way. People were impressed by the preachings of Nanak and started prostrating themselves before him. They also wanted to make offerings to him. But there was a basic difference between the attitude of the priests and that of Nanak. The priests accepted whatever was offered to them : foodgrains, cash, silver, gold, jewels, etc. They even tried to extort as much out of their clients as they could. But Nanak was cast in a different mould ; he would not accept anything from the people.

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If some wealthy person insisted on making an offering, Nanak would ask him to distribute the offerings amongst the needy and the poor, or to spend the money in some public cause. Nanak also condemned the priests for their greed. They did not care for religion or spirituality ; their interest lay only in collecting offerings. Nanak regarded money as the biggest enemy of man.

Wealth had failed to attract Nanak. It was now the turn of woman to try her temptations. Nanak and Mardana had now reached Assam after a long, difficult and dangerous journey. The region was known as 'Kamrup' in those days—'the centre of womanly charms'. A beautiful woman, Nurshah, ruled over this area. Womenfolk of her realm were loose in their morals ; in fact the whole society was a permissive and immoral society. Nurshah did not like any holy or religious man to enter her realms, and, if they entered, she would try to tempt them and bring about their fall. She had kept a number of beauteous, charming and seductive girls at her court for the above purpose. Nurshah herself possessed superb charms. She was known to possess an exceptionally strong power to attract men and bring them under her spell. When Nurshah heard that a great saint had come into her realm, she sent her court damsels to try their charms on Nanak. The courtesans reached the place outside the town where Nanak was staying, and with their sweet music and dance and amorous gestures, tried to tempt Nanak, but miserably failed in their attempts. Crest-fallen, they went back to Nurshah and related to her the story of their failure. Nurshah was surprised and felt insulted. She decided to confront the *faqir* herself and try her charms on him. She was cock-sure that she would succeed in vanquishing him in no time. She practised her best charms and sang and danced in such a voluptuous and amorous manner that the biggest *yogi* would have probably succumbed to her. But Nurshah failed in her object of tempting Nanak. She was humbled. She said,

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"There has been nobody who has not succumbed to my charms."

Nanak : Probably, they did not know what women really were.

Nurshah : I am not only a woman but a magician, a charmer.

Nanak : But your magic cannot prevail upon me.

Nurshah : Why ?

Nanak : I am already a victim of the magic of love.

Nurshah : Who is your beloved ?

Nanak : The One whom everybody should love.

Nanak then advised Nurshah to lead a virtuous marital life. She gave up her vicious and immoral life that very day.

From Assam Nanak started on his return journey. After crossing Bengal, he made a coastal voyage and reached Jagannath Puri, in Orissa, which is another great place of pilgrimage of the Hindus. There is a famous temple in the town, dedicated to 'Jagan-Nath', 'the Lord of the World'. As nowadays, so also in those days, the Lord was worshipped, every morning and evening, with great pomp and show. The priests would sing hymns, blow conches and ring bells, while the chief priest performed the ritual of *aarti* with burning earthen lamps, incense and flowers placed in a large salver of gold. After the ritual, the whole congregation would prostrate before the Lord. Nanak, however, did not join the congregation but remained standing outside the temple with eyes raised towards the Heaven. He entered into communion with the Lord and there and then sang one of his most ecstatic songs, entitled *Aarti*. He felt that the whole universe was performing the *aarti* of its Lord. In this *aarti*, as the opening lines of the song declare,—

"The sky serves as the salver ;
The sun and the moon as the lamps ;

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The stars as the pearls ;

The *Malayanal* (fragrant breezes coming from the south, from the forests of sandal) provide the incense ;

The winds themselves fan the *chanvar* ;

The forests offer flowers ;

....

...."

From Jagannath Puri Nanak and Mardana moved towards the central parts of India, and crossed the Vindhya mountains. After passing through Bhopal, Sagar, Chanderi, Bharatpur, Jind, Kaithal and Malerkotla, both the travellers reached Sultanpur after a lapse of more than four years. People of Sultanpur greatly rejoiced on seeing the great man back amidst them. The Nawab paid him a visit, and hundreds of his admirers and friends also came to see him. Mardana went to Talwandi to meet his own people there and related the story of their travels to the parents of Nanak. They sent a message through Mardana to Nanak to pay a visit to Talwandi. But Nanak was keen to spread his message and his teachings amongst more and more people.

Soon after, Nanak went to Pakpattan to pay a visit to the shrine of the great Sheikh Farid. There he held religious discussions with Sheikh Brahm, the then occupant of Farid's *Gaddi*, and with other followers of the Sheikh.

From Pakpattan Nanak and Mardana went to Bushair in the Himalayas and visited several other places in the hills. Then the Guru returned to the plains and decided to visit Talwandi in order to see his old parents. Thus ended the first *Udasi* (journey) of Guru Nanak.

After staying at Talwandi for some time, the Guru, again accompanied by Mardana, set out on his second *Udasi*. He visited a number of towns and villages in the Malwa and Majha

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regions of Punjab. Then he reached Sirsa where he stayed for a long while. From there the Guru went to Bikaner, where he held discourses with Jain *sadhus*. From Bikaner, both the travellers proceeded through Marwar, Jaisalmer and Jodhpur to Ajmer, where Nanak visited the shrine of Pir Qutb-ud-Din and held discussions with the followers of the Pir and converted many of them to his thoughts. From Ajmer, the Guru went to Pushkar-Raj and then visited a number of other places, such as Abu Hills, Ujjain, Indore, Nagpur, Hyderabad etc. From there he went down to Cape Kumari, took a boat from there and landed in Ceylon. The ruler of Ceylon, Raja Shiv Nabh, met Guru Nanak and was deeply impressed by the latter's philosophy and teachings. Shiv Nabh invited Nanak to the palace, and the Queen began to look after the *faqir* coming from the distant Punjab with the devotion of a disciple.

Guru Nanak left Ceylon after staying there for 2½ years and after converting a large number of people to his views. The return journey was made along the Western Coast of India and then through Sind. They travelled through Malabar, Travancore, Cochin, Calicut and then through Gujarat, visiting on the way Baroda, Surat, Junagarh etc. Then they crossed Sind and reached Multan, which was full of Muslim holy men who were very proud and arrogant. Guru Nanak held many discourses and discussions with them and ultimately many of the *faqirs* realized the truth of Nanak's message.

After his success at Multan, the Guru went to Tulamba where he reformed a big *thug*, Sheikh Sajjan, who outwardly showed great hospitality towards wayfarers, hosted them in his house, but, in the night, robbed and murdered them to acquire their belongings. Sajjan entirely changed his mode of life after meeting Nanak and became his devoted disciple and, subsequently, a missionary of Nanak's faith.

The Guru ultimately reached Talwandi to meet his old

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parents, relations and friends. Rae Bular had grown very old and he felt that he had only a few days more to live. He was keen to see Nanak whom he had been admiring since the Guru's childhood. Nanak gave solace to Rae Bular.

Nanak set out on his third *Udasi* in 1514, accompanied, as usual, by Mardana. This time they went towards the northern hilly areas. They visited Palampur, Kangra, Mandi, Chamba, Sirmur, Mussouri, Uttar Kashi and Garhwal. They also visited Gangotri, the source of the Ganges. On their return journey they reached Srinagar where the Guru had an encounter with Brahm Das, the most eminent of Kashmiri Pandits of his times. After several discussions, Brahm Das recognised the greatness of Nanak and became his follower.

From Srinagar, Nanak penetrated into the higher Himalayas and met 'Siddhs' and 'Yogis'. These holy men had renounced the world and were busy in meditation, in penance, and in *yog*. They did not bother about the world and how the people were passing their days. Nanak convinced them that their ways and means to attain salvation were wrong and that they were selfish people. Guru Nanak then returned to Talwandi.

After staying at Talwandi for 15 months, Guru Nanak and Mardana started on their fourth journey in 1518. This time Nanak decided to go as far towards the West as possible. He wanted to visit the Middle East Muslim countries. More particularly, he was keen to visit Mecca, the most sacred place and the biggest centre of pilgrimage for the Muslim world.

Nanak moved in the north-western direction and his first big hault was at Hasan Abdal which was then a great religious centre of Muslims. There he had an encounter with Baba Wali Kandhari, a great Muslim divine, whose pride was ultimately humbled.

Nanak then reached Peshawar which, in those days, had a

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great centre of 'Jogis'. Guru Nanak's discourses had a great effect on them.

From Peshawar, Nanak and Mardana proceeded further and after a long and hazardous journey of about 3,000 miles, ultimately reached Mecca. The real place of pilgrimage in the town of Mecca is a building called *Kaaba*. According to the Muslim custom, no pilgrim should sleep nearabout *Kaaba* with his feet towards this building. Nanak was extremely weary and foot-sore when he reached near *Kaaba*, and, probably not aware of the Muslim custom, lay down to rest with his feet towards the holy place. When the Muslim priests saw this, they were enraged and came running towards Nanak. One of them enquired of Nanak rudely, "Who are you ? Why are you committing a sacrilege by placing your feet towards the holy *Kaaba* ?" The Guru calmly replied, "As far as I am concerned, I see *Kaaba* in every direction. I am dead tired and unable to move. Kindly drag my feet in the direction in which there is no House of God." This simple reply disarmed the priests and they were obliged to think on what Nanak had told them. Nanak further preached to the Muslim priests and 'Hajis' (pilgrims) that God was Omnipresent and He cannot be confined to a particular place or house or building. He also protested that keeping fasts (*Roza*) and performing *Namaz* (Muslim prayer) are only outward forms of religion. God cannot be pleased with such actions ; in fact He wants men to be honest, compassionate, pious and good in actions.

After preaching his ideas at Mecca, the Guru started on his return journey in which he first made a big hault at Baghdad. There also he preached his ideas and a large number of people accepted them.

From Baghdad Nanak and Mardana passed through Persia and Afghanistan and on their way visited Tehran, Tashkand, Bukhara, Samarkand, Kabul etc. Then they crossed the Khyber

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Pass and after passing through Peshawar, Nowshera, Attack, Rawalpindi and Gujarat, reached Eminabad in April, 1521.

Nanak had earlier heard, during his journey through Central Asia, that Babar, a Mughal Chieftain, was planning to invade Punjab. Soon after, Babar launched the expected invasion, and after plundering and pillaging a number of towns, attacked Eminabad and unleashed the most terrible atrocities on its inhabitants, since its ruler had resisted him. On the orders of Babar, his soldiers burned houses, massacred thousands of people and dishonoured women. Babar's forces also took thousands as prisoners. Nanak and Mardana were also hauled up. The prisoners were treated in a most barbarous manner. Babar came to know that a very pious man had been arrested, and ordered the release of Nanak. But Nanak decided to share the woes of his fellow beings and refused to leave the prison camp. He announced that he would go out of the camp only if all the prisoners were set free.

Then Babar called Nanak to his presence. Nanak fearlessly urged upon Babar to understand what real religion, and particularly Islam, meant and taught. He also advised Babar to desist from oppressing people who were all sons of the Creator.

After a few days, Babar released all the prisoners and returned to Kabul. However, Nanak continued to stay at Eminabad in order to console the bereaved and the oppressed. He exhorted the people of Eminabad to lead an honest and virtuous life so that they should escape such misfortunes in future.

Nanak was deeply grieved at the terrible atrocities and barbarities committed by Babar's hordes on the innocent people, more particularly on the women of Eminabad. He composed several poignant poems during his stay in the town. In one of the poems, addressing himself to Lalo, the carpenter, at whose humble abode he had stayed during his first

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visit to Eminabad 20 years ago, the Guru says :

I pronounce the word of the Lord, as it is revealed to me ; O Lalo !

The Mughal (Babar) is rushing from Kabul, with his wedding-party of sin ; he is forcibly asking the people to surrender their womenfolk to him.

Modesty and Piety have hidden themselves ; Sin is strutting about as the chief.

Hindu and Muslim priests, Qazis and Brahmans, have been rendered ineffective, both in their words and functions ;

The Devil himself is performing the (forced) marriage.

....

....

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4

KARTARPUR

As a result of the extraordinary courage shown by Nanak at Eminabad during his imprisonment, more particularly in the presence of Babar, as also the services rendered by him to the unfortunate residents of that town, the fame of Nanak spread rapidly far and wide. Daulat Khan Lodhi was now holding the Governorship of Lahore. He invited Guru Nanak to Lahore and extended a royal welcome and hospitality to his old *modi.* Nanak's respect amongst people increased steadily and thousands began looking at him as a genuine man of God and His messenger, and a large number of people of Lahore became his followers and devotees. One of them was a high official dignitary who was nick-named 'Karoria' since he was believed to possess a crore of rupees. This Karoria dedicated a large piece of land on the bank of the Ravi to the Guru to enable him to establish his headquarters.

The Guru had now attained the age of 52. During the last 20 years, he had travelled over the whole of India, had visited Ceylon, Afghanistan, Persia, Iraq and Arabia, and had preached his ideas to millions of people. He had also all along held the view that it was wrong to renounce the world, go to the jungles, lead an isolated life and perform penances or *yoga* for attaining salvation and realizing God. His main philosophy was that one

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should live in the world, yet live above the temptations of life ; and that one should earn through the sweat of one's brow and should lead a virtuous and contented life. One should be honest in one's thoughts and deeds. Nanak wanted to reorganise society which should be free of conflicts, greed, selfishness and exploitation and should be based on cooperation, equality and honest dealings. Guru Nanak decided to give a lead to mankind by forming a nucleus of such an ideal society in a new village which he now decided to found on the land donated by Karoria. He also decided to name the village as Kartarpur, after one of the names of God—'Kartar'—the Maker and the Creator.

Guru Nanak got a hut constructed for himself on the land, and invited his followers to come and settle in the new village. Many followers accepted his invitation. Guru Nanak divided the land amongst his followers and reserved a few acres for himself. He now wanted to lead the life of a farmer and a householder in the same way as other settlers would do. He wanted to practise what he preached to others.

After a few months, Nanak brought his aged parents from Talwandi to live with him. He also brought his wife Sulakhni and both the sons to Kartarpur. He thus again set up his household at the new village.

Nanak held *satsangs* at Kartarpur everyday and gave discourses to the congregations on various topics.

Nanak had been composing hymns and songs ever since his boyhood ; but after settling down at Kartarpur, his poetic genius flowered more and more. Compositions flowed from his mind like a hill-torrent. He would sing the compositions at the *satsangs*, accompanied by Mardana on the Rebeck as usual.

It was at Kartarpur that Guru Nanak, besides composing a large number of hymns, composed four of his greatest poems,

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which include three *Vars*, namely, *Var Malhar*, *Var Majh* and *Var Asa*, and the sublime *Japji*, which is the masterpiece of the Guru and the very epitome of his philosophy. These compositions are full of imaginative flights and devotional fervour. They expound the nature of the Supreme Reality and describe the relationship of matter and soul with God. The *Japji* is recited everyday by every devout Sikh and even by a large number of Hindus to this day.

Soon after shifting to Kartarpur, the parents of Nanak passed away within a few months of each other. Nanak bore the loss with calm fortitude as became the man who knew the reality of life and death.

Mardana, the life-long companion of Nanak, also died after some time. Nanak then prevailed upon Mardana's son, Shehzada, to take his father's place as the minstrel of the Guru.

The Guru set a pattern of life which was to be followed by all the residents of the village. The keynote of this life was that everybody should work while remembering God and everybody should remember God while doing his daily work. The residents were also expected to lead a corporate life like a family.

Kirtan was conducted by the minstrel in the presence of the Guru every morning and attendance at the *Kirtan* was compulsory for all. After the *Kirtan*, the Guru would give a discourse to the disciples.

In order to emphasise the corporate nature of the community, Guru Nanak started the institution of *langar*, i.e. 'community kitchen' and 'community dining'. A large number of people visited the Guru's headquarters everyday and they would partake of the food prepared in the *langar*. On special occasions, the entire population of Kartarpur, together with all the visitors of the day, would arrange a big *langar* to show their

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brotherhood. The 'community dining' was also symbolic of the fact that all persons, irrespective of whether they belonged to high castes or low castes or whether they were rich or poor, were equal. The Guru was against any kind of distinction between man and man.

One day an orthodox Brahman came to the Guru and asked for food. The Guru asked him to go to the *langar* and take food there. But the Brahman refused to do so, since, according to him, by doing so, he would lose his caste and his religion. He said he could only eat what he had cooked himself—and that too in a separate place. He would first dig up the earth to a depth of a cubit, so that all impurities of the surface were removed, and then mark out a small square of land for cooking the food. None but he himself would enter that square (*chauka*). He would then light fire with sticks of wood which he would first wash to remove all impurities, then cook his food and take the same on that very spot. The Brahman asked the Guru to give him flour and *dal* etc. and allow him to prepare his food in the manner described by him above. Nanak laughed in his sleeve, but gave the necessary articles to the Brahman and asked him to choose any spot and cook food for himself. The Brahman chose a spot and began to dig it, but found bones in the earth. He chose another spot, but there, too, bones were found. He continued digging at various spots the whole day, but with the same result. At last, he understood what the Guru had desired to teach him, went to the Guru, fell at his feet and expressed his readiness to take food in the *langar*. After taking his food, he came back to the Guru, who then advised him to give up all such meaningless practices and try to be pure in thoughts and deeds.

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The Guru laid special emphasis, in his discourses, as well as compositions, on the following points :

1. God is one ; He has no shape : He is free from birth and death.
2. The whole universe has been created by Him.
3. The soul has been separated from the Lord.
4. Ego stands between the soul and God and prevents the former from merging into the latter.
5. The soul can obtain salvation and merge itself into the Lord. Only a true Guru can lead the soul to that final goal.
6. The True Name is the path which takes the soul to the final goal.
7. One need not renounce the world in order to get salvation ; one can do so even while leading a householder's life.
8. Distinctions based on religion, sex, race, birth and castes should end.
9. Formalism, ritualism, and shams in religion should be done away with.
10. Every kind of oppression and exploitation should stop.
11. Everyone should work honestly, earn his bread by the sweat of his brow and share his bread with others.

These and similar ideas and tenets of the philosophy of Guru Nanak were accepted by his followers ; the ideas by and by became principles, and the principles ultimately took the shape of a faith—which later on came to be called the 'Sikh' faith.

The year 1539 approached. The Guru realized that his earthly sojourn would come to its close in near future. He,

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therefore, decided to nominate his most suitable follower to Guruship. It was necessary that some capable person should guide the *Sangat* and nurture the infant church established by him. Several of the disciples of Guru Nanak were outstanding in their devotion to him. But he wanted to choose the most devoted one amongst them. He was secretly examining their conduct. At last one day he decided to test the faith and devotion of his disciples, in order to judge their comparative worth.

The Guru suddenly started running towards the jungle, accompanied by dogs. His clothes were torn and he had a knife in his hand. His devotees, not knowing what the matter was, also followed him. Some of them thought that the Guru had gone out of his head and retraced their steps. The Guru was much ahead of others. He was shouting and throwing copper coins on his way. Some of the followers collected the coins and returned to the village. At some distance the remaining followers came across silver coins. Most of them swooped down on these coins, fought with one another over them, and, collecting as many coins as they could lay their hands on, they came back. Now only a few remained in the race. After a while they found gold coins scattered here and there. This was too big a temptation for most of them who collected the coins and retraced their steps.

Only three followers spurned even the gold coins and continued to follow the Guru who was still shouting and running ahead of them. After some time the Guru stopped at a place. A dead body was lying there. The body had decayed and was emitting foul smell.

"Whoever wants to remain with me shall eat the flesh of this dead body," the Guru announced.

On hearing this, two of the three followers bolted away. They felt that their comrades who had returned earlier, thinking that Nanak had gone out of his head, were probably correct.

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The last disciple who stayed with the Guru was named Lehna. He stepped forward and started removing the shroud from the dead body. At this stage, Nanak intervened and prevented Lehna from carrying out his order. Nanak declared, "You are my best devotee ; in fact, you are a part of my own self." Guru Nanak decided to make Lehna the next Guru and returned to the village, along with the latter.

Before coming to Kartarpur and accepting Nanak as his Guru, Lenha had been living in the village Khadur which is not far away from Kartarpur. One of the inhabitants of that village, Jodhaji, was a follower of the Guru. He used to recite *Japji* everyday. Lehna, who was a devotee of goddess Durga, one day heard Jodha reciting *Japji* and was stirred to his depths on hearing this sublime hymn. A great desire arose in his heart to see the author of the inspiring composition. Lehna was a simple farmer, but was pious and truthful. He reached Kartarpur, met the Guru and became his devoted follower.

On returning to the village, Guru Nanak collected his followers and announced that Lehna would be their next Guru. He rechristened Lehna by the name of "Angad" after the annointing ceremony. The Guru himself bowed before his successor. He also assured Guru Angad that his own spirit would always remain with him.

Then Guru Nanak asked his followers to make arrangements for his last congregation. Shortly thereafter, the entire Kartarpur community gathered round a raised platform on which Guru Nanak sang his last song to the tune of Shehzada's *Rabab*, and as soon as the song was over the soul of Nanak merged in the Supreme Being.

The Hindu followers of the Guru wanted to consign the earthly remains of the Guru to flames according to the Hindu custom, while the Muslim followers wanted to bury him

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according to the Muslim custom. This shows how popular Guru Nanak had become amongst the followers of both the religions. He was, however, neither a Hindu nor a Musalman, or, more correctly speaking, he was both a true Hindu and a true Musalman. He was :

"Nanak Shah Faqir
Hindu Ka Guru
Musalman Ka Pir."

In fact, Guru Nanak belonged to the entire humanity.

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5
TEACHINGS

The political, economic, religious, social and cultural conditions of a society are bound to influence and shape the lives of the people at large, in every age and every country. But, on the other hand, instances are not lacking wherein an individual has influenced the entire society and reshaped it in various fields of its activity, outlook and thought.

The history of the world shows that whenever a society has reached the depth of its degradation and degeneration, some individual emerges in that society who changes it to its roots and gives a new direction to its thoughts and actions. That powerful individual makes an impact on the society for generations, and, in several cases, that impact over-flows the boundaries of the country in which he is born. Such great men have been born from time to time in every country and every society. The people remember them as incarnations of God or His messengers. Rama, Krishna, the Buddha, Jesus Christ, Mohammad, Nanak etc. were extraordinary individuals of this sort who appeared in different ages and different countries and changed the life of the people.

Society in the times of Guru Nanak was feudalistic and the system of government was monarchic. A large part of India was being governed by a king of the Lodhi dynasty, with Delhi as his capital, while the remaining parts of the country

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were divided into a number of large and small principalities. All these kings and rulers enjoyed absolute power and authority. They were despotic to the extreme. Their personal will was the law. The entire wealth of their realms and even lives of their subjects were under their control and at their mercy. The Lodhi Kingdom was divided into Provinces which were administered by Governors. Then there were innumberable big and small *jagirdars*. These governors and *jagirdars* also acted as despots in their own spheres. Thus, a handful of people enjoyed all kinds of power and privileges, while the people at large had no say in political matters. In fact, their position was no better than that of slaves. Absolute power had made the rulers and their officers corrupt, wilful, aggressive and cruel. In one of his compositions Nanak says :

"The rulers are like tigers and the officers are like hounds."

Every court—big or small—was a centre of intrigues. Almost all the rulers, governors, courtiers and *jagridars* led a loose moral life and indulged in all sorts of pleasures of the flesh. Corruption was rampant at every level and justice could be easily purchased. In another of his compositions, the Guru says :

"Nobody desists from getting illegal gratification ; the rulers decide cases when their palms are greased ; they do not care even if God Himself asks them to do justice."

He again says at another place :

"This is *Kaliyug* ; people have become greedy like dogs : they want to eat up what rightfully belongs to others, though it should be like carrion flesh to them."

Guru Nanak fully realized that the political system of the country was rotten to the core, and that people were groaning under all kinds of aggression and injustice perpetrated by the system. People had no rights and no freedom. Nobody could raise his little finger against the rulers and their officers. However, Nanak possessed super-human courage and he boldly

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raised his powerful voice against the establishment and the system. Of course, he could not change the political system single-handed, but by openly denouncing the system he gave courage to the people and sowed the seeds of rebellion which grew with the passage of time and which, ultimately, became a powerful public rising in the times of the tenth Guru.

In the economic field, it was a sordid story of a handful of wealthy persons—landlords, traders and bankers--sucking the blood of the poor. While a few rolled in wealth, millions did not have enough to make both ends meet. The wealthy were greedy, selfish and hard-hearted. Exploitation was the rule of the day. The rich wanted to amass as much wealth as they could, by fair and foul means. Guru Nanak felt deeply distressed at the economic conditions of the country and vehemently opposed the prevalent system. He openly condemned greed and rapaciousness and exploitation of the masses by the few. He declared :

> "What belongs to others should be loathsome—just like cow's flesh (to the Hindu) and pig's flesh (to the Muslim)."

He wanted to reconstruct society on the basis of freedom from exploitation, greed and aggrandisement. In that society, every person, whether rich or poor, should work with his hands and earn his bread by the sweat of his brow. He gave a practical shape to these ideas in the village which he founded. He himself gave the lead to his followers by doing farm work with his hands at Kartarpur even after he had become a famous man and thousands of persons had become his disciples and devotees. The fact that Nanak accepted the humble bread of an humble man, Lalo, and rejected the delicious food of the rich, Malik Bhago, shows his attitude towards wealth. Guru Nanak also condemned wealth as the root-cause of all sins. He emphatically said that Mammon-worshippers would never be able to attain salvation.

The religious scene in India was no less chaotic and full of

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exploitation than the political or economic scenes. In the religious field, Pandits and Maulvis, i.e. Hindu and Muslim priests, enjoyed the same power as did rulers and courtiers in the political field, or landlords and rich men in the economic field. These priests controlled the minds of the people who did not dare to disobey them. The priests, instead of giving true knowledge or spiritual light to the people, sold religion and made money for themselves. They laid all emphasis on observance of rituals, customs, traditions etc. and on outward forms of religion. The Muslim priests exhorted the Muslims to offer prayers (*Namaz*) five times a day and observe fasts (*Roza*) during the month of *Ramzan*. That would ensure their entry into Heaven, they said. Similarly, Hindu priests exhorted the Hindus to go to the temples and worship gods and goddesses. Hindus were divided into a large number of religious sects, each with its own supreme deity and its own system of prayers. Instead of worshipping the One, they worshipped a number of gods and goddesses—each according to his faith. Hindu religious leaders also laid emphasis on observing outward forms of religion and customs, like putting on the sacred thread, worshipping idols, observing religious fasts, telling the beads etc. Priests of both the religions also exhorted the people to visit places of pilgrimage. Hindu priests also laid great stress on bathing in holy rivers, lakes and tanks. They claimed that by performing such actions and observing formalities and rituals, people would surely obtain salvation.

Nanak opposed all kinds of formalism and symbolism. He said that the true path to salvation lay in leading a pure life free of sins, greed, lust, selfishness and exploitation. Mere observance of rituals and formal practices, he said, was of no use. In one of his compositions he says :

> "One may bathe (at holy places) and worship idols ; but without devotion to the Lord one remains impure."

Guru Nanak was against believing in all sorts of gods and

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goddesses. He believed in one God who was the Lord, the Creator, the only Reality, the Omnipresent, the Omniscient. He exhorted the people to worship the One and the only God.

As already pointed out, both Islam and Hindu religions were divided into numerous sects and faiths. These sects had their own headquarters and a number of other centres. They had also their own Heads or chief exponents. Moreover, there were thousands of *faqirs*, *sadhus*, *yogis* and *sanyasis* who were divided amongst various religious orders. All these sects, faiths and orders had their own philosophy and different concepts of God, soul and the universe. Each claimed that its theory was the only correct theory. Each also showed a different path to salvation and enjoined upon its followers different rituals and observances. Also, according to most of them, it was necessary to renounce the world in order to attain salvation and God. People were puzzled and did not know which philosophy was correct and what was the true path to salvation. They could not distinguish between truth and falsehood and between true knowledge and false ideas. They did not know what was good for them.

Nanak tried to remove the cobwebs from the religious scene. He placed a simple and practical philosophy before the people. He told them that they could realize God by leading a pious life and by loving all beings. It was not necessary, according to him, to renounce the world and go to the jungles. Salvation could be achieved, he said, by working with one's own hands and by sharing one's earnings with others. He laid emphasis on remembering the Name.

The two communities of India—Hindu and Muslim—were sharply antagonistic towards each other. They could not intermarry and could not take food together. Each regarded its own religion as superior to that of the other. The Muslims were the rulers of the day and they tried to convert Hindus to Islam at the point of the sword. They demolished temples and

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desecrated the holy places of the Hindus. Muslims regarded their God, Allah, as the only true God, Mohammad as the only prophet, and *Quran* as the only word of God, and denounced the God of Hindus and their prophets, and scriptures as false. They called the Hindus 'Kafirs'—infidels. They also enforced their own law, *Shariat*, on the land. The result was that there was not only tension between the two communities but deep hatred towards each other.

Nanak boldly preached that God is not different for the people of different faiths but is one for all ; He is the Creator and Father of all and loves all His children equally. Nanak tried to bring the two communities together and told them that the real point lay in trying to become a *real* Hindu or a *real* Muslim, which meant the same thing. Nanak laid stress on humanism, broad-mindedness and tolerance. Nanak's ideas found favour not only with a large number of Hindus but with a considerable number of Muslims also. He tried to establish a faith which would be a happy synthesis of the two.

Caste system was another bane of the social order of the day. The caste system in Vedic times had been evolved by the leaders of the Aryans who had migrated to India, as a matter of political and social necessity. The number of Aryans was small and, therefore, they divided themselves into *Varnas* or castes and assigned certain duties to each. In other words, the caste system was based on the particular kind of work each caste was ordained to perform. Everybody was free to change his vocation and, consequently, his 'caste' ; and nobody was bound to follow the occupation of his father. However, as time passed, rigidity entered into the system and by and by castes came to be based only on birth, *i.e.* one who was born in a particular caste had to remain in that caste. However, this, by itself, would not cause much harm to society. The real defect in the system lay in the fact that society was divided into 'high' castes and 'low' castes. Even amongst high castes, there were gradations. But the most condemnable aspect of the

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caste system was that the so-called low caste people were maltreated by the people of high castes ; in fact, they were treated worse than slaves. They were considered as "untouchables". If a Hindu of a high caste touched a person of a low caste even by mistake, he would lose his religion and his caste. He was even declared as outcast.

Even the Muslim community could not escape from being influenced by the caste system. Islam preaches equality amongst Muslims, but the Muslim community of India divided itself into a number of castes or sections. The distinction of 'high' and 'low' entered their ranks also.

Guru Nanak raised a powerful voice of protest against the division of society into castes. He declared that no caste was high or low. It was not the caste but the thoughts and actions which made a man high or low. Birth in a particular caste was of no significance. Nanak said that pride in one's caste or birth was meaningless. In one of his compositions he says :

"The pride of caste and family is hollow ;
The Lord is the only refuge for all beings."

At another place he says :

"I tell you that caste and birth have no value in the House of Truth ; one's caste and honour are according to one's actions."

Nanak said that mankind could rightly be divided into two sections : one comprising 'Gurmukhs'—men of God ; and the other 'Manmukhs'—egocentric people, or those who are interested only in themselves and their worldly affairs.

The condition of women in the Indian society of Nanak's times was simply deplorable. Woman was regarded as the property of her husband. Women were strictly enjoined to remain within the four walls of their houses. They did not enjoy any kind of freedom whatsoever. They were regarded as

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impure and the root-cause of all evils. Guru Nanak protested against the shabby treatment meted out to womenfolk. In one of his compositions he says :

> "Why regard woman as low and contemptible ? It is she who gives birth to great ones."

Guru Nanak pleaded for ameliorating the condition of women and for giving them an honourable status in society.

Guru Nanak also made an important impact on the cultural scene. Hindu scholars of his times regarded Sanskrit as the only language fit for the expression of religious ideas and theories. They looked upon the language of the common man —the language of daily use of the people at large—as unworthy and unfit as a vehicle of higher thought. Guru Nanak wanted to address himself to the masses and, therefore, he composed his entire *Bani* in the language of the people. He thus raised the status of the common language of the people.

The life, teachings and thoughts of Guru Nanak brought about a revolution in the society of his times, and since then millions of people have been deeply influenced by them.

Guru Nanak was a great humanist, a great poet, a great revolutionary, a great reformer, a great thinker and a great devotee of God. He did not believe in attaining salvation for himself alone but showed the path of salvation to the entire mankind.

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6
DIVINE LIGHTS

What is the use of bathing at holy places, if the mind is full of the dirt of pride ?

What use washing your body when the inside is dirty with avarice, falsehood and hypocrisy ?

The real impurity consists in looking at others' women covetously, admiring their beauty with evil intention, and in trying to grab what belongs to others.

Lust and anger destroy one's body.

Suffering is the medicine of the soul, while pleasure is its malady.

O Nanak ! The world is transitory ; pursuit of pleasure brings nothing but pain.

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One who covets others' possessions obtains nothing but sorrow.

It is no use trying to be clever. The Lord gives in an instant when He so likes, and also takes away in a moment if He so desires.

Wrong deeds result in nothing but repentance.

Do not speak rudely to others ; thus avoid quarrels.

Good qualities of others should be shared and bad ones should be avoided.

The seeker advances steadily, while one who only indulges in empty discussions destroys himself.

We ourselves are responsible for our deeds—good or bad ; and we cannot escape their fruits.

It lies in our own power to achieve our object.

People waste their nights in sleeping and days in eating.

Wisdom comes to a person only through self-contemplation.

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Even a learned man is an ignorant fool if he is steeped in greed and pride.

The sour tongue makes the body and the mind sour.

Why regard woman as low and contemptible ? It is she who gives birth to great ones.

Truth is the highest thing ; but good conduct is higher than Truth.

The essence of all virtue lies in sweetness and humility.

To conquer the self is to conquer the world.

Falsehood should be as abominable as eating carrion flesh.

O Nanak ! Falsehood does not last long ; it is only Truth that lasts and abides.

There should be no doubt in your mind that the world is short-lived.

Birth and death take place according to His will ; men come and go as He desires.

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One comes and goes in accordance with His will, which pervades all round and which is supreme.

All are subject to delusion ; only the Lord God is above it.

Hollow is the glory of birth and position ; God is the final refuge of all beings.

With whom should we develop friendship ?
The world is transitory and so is life.

He existed at the beginning, at the beginning of the *Yugas* ;
He exists in the present, and He shall exist for ever.

He shines in everything ; everything shines with His light.

He alone is true, immanent and everlasting ; do not think that anyone else possesses these attributes.

The whole world is under delusion wrought by money, lust, greed and egoism.

Power, wealth, physical charm, caste and pride of youth—all these five delude man.

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Egoism is a chronic disease ; but a remedy also exists for it.

He is ignorant who is without inner light ; this cannot be attained without the help and grace of the Guru.

Do not be proud, saith Nanak. Pride will only put the load of sin on your head.

The people are gathering the load of sins ; nobody cares to trade in virtues.

Only that body may be called pure, which is steeped in the True Name.

It is you who sow the seeds ; it is you who shall reap the harvest.

Only that person can be said to have renounced the world who has given up worldly desires.

Merge yourself into the Lord ; only then can your feeling of separate existence be annihilated.

The egocentric avoids doing good deeds and idles away his time ; he is caught up in the wilderness (of his ego).

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If you desire to play the game of love with me, come to me with thy head on thy palm.

Only through service can one achieve the desired object ; in service lies purity of conduct.

It is only the True Name which can satisfy your inner craving, saith Nanak.

You have been practising deceipt and hypocrisy, and have been torturing your body (in order to earn spiritual merit) ;
O Soul ! You will only reap what you have sown.

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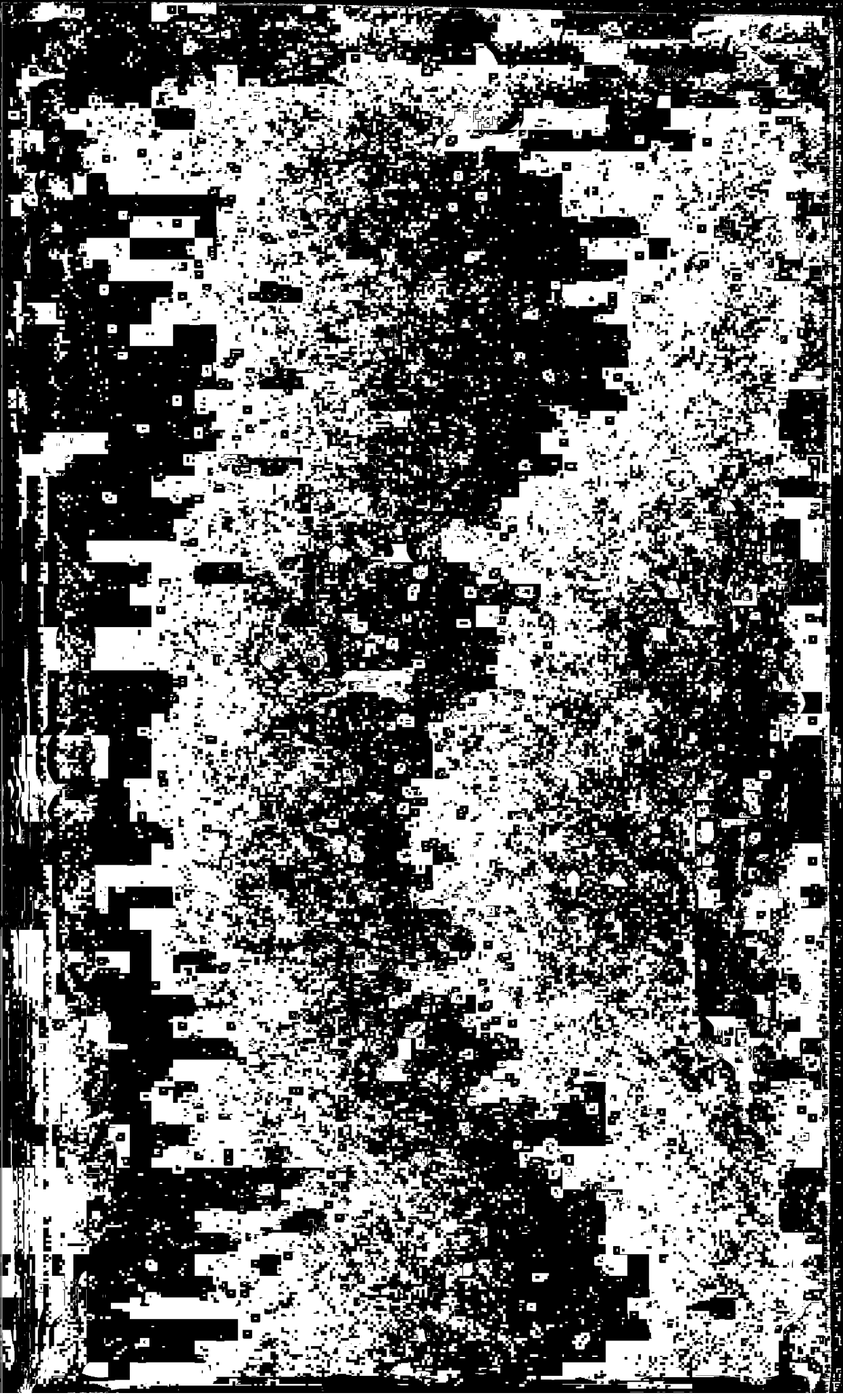

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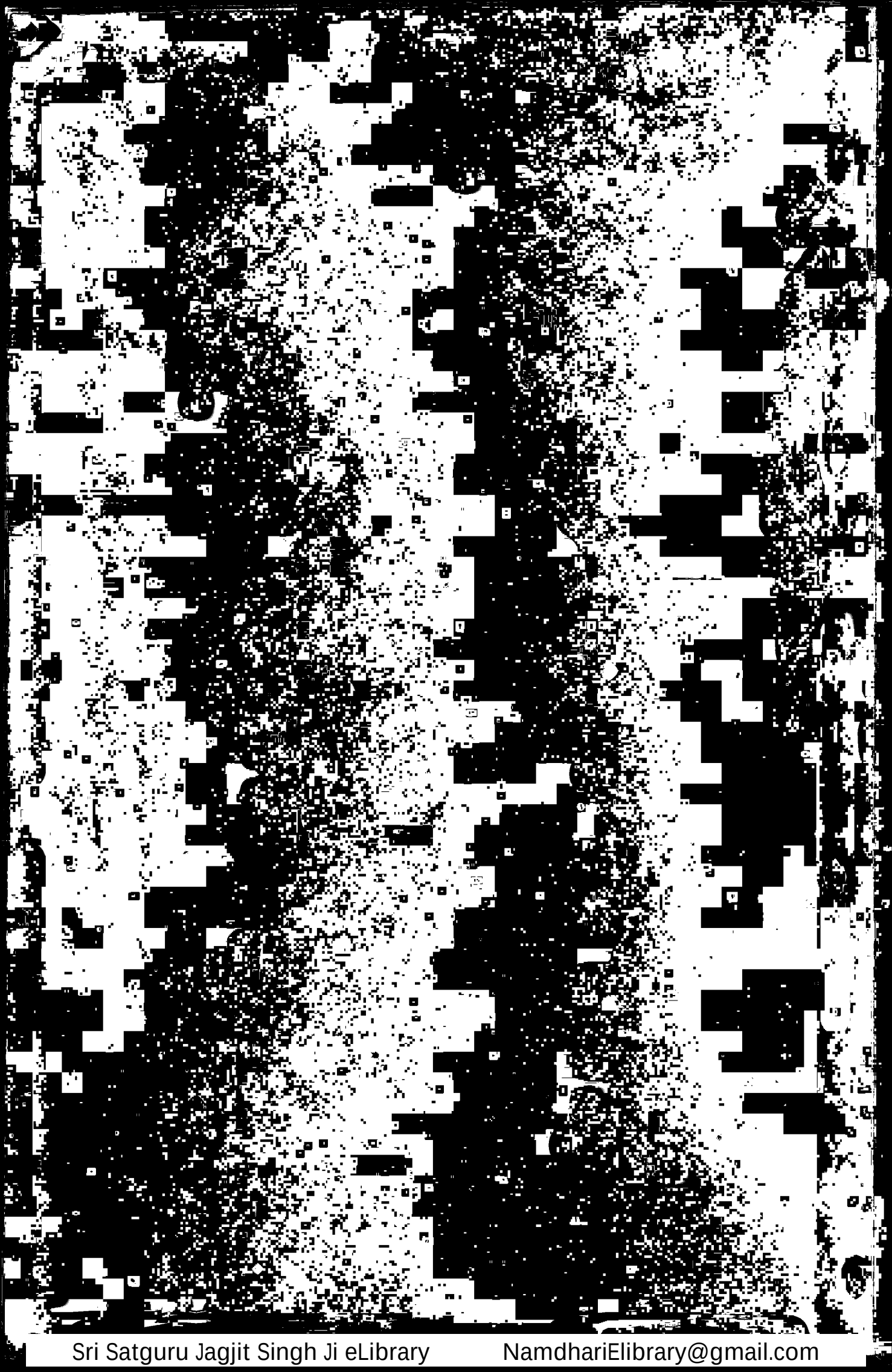

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